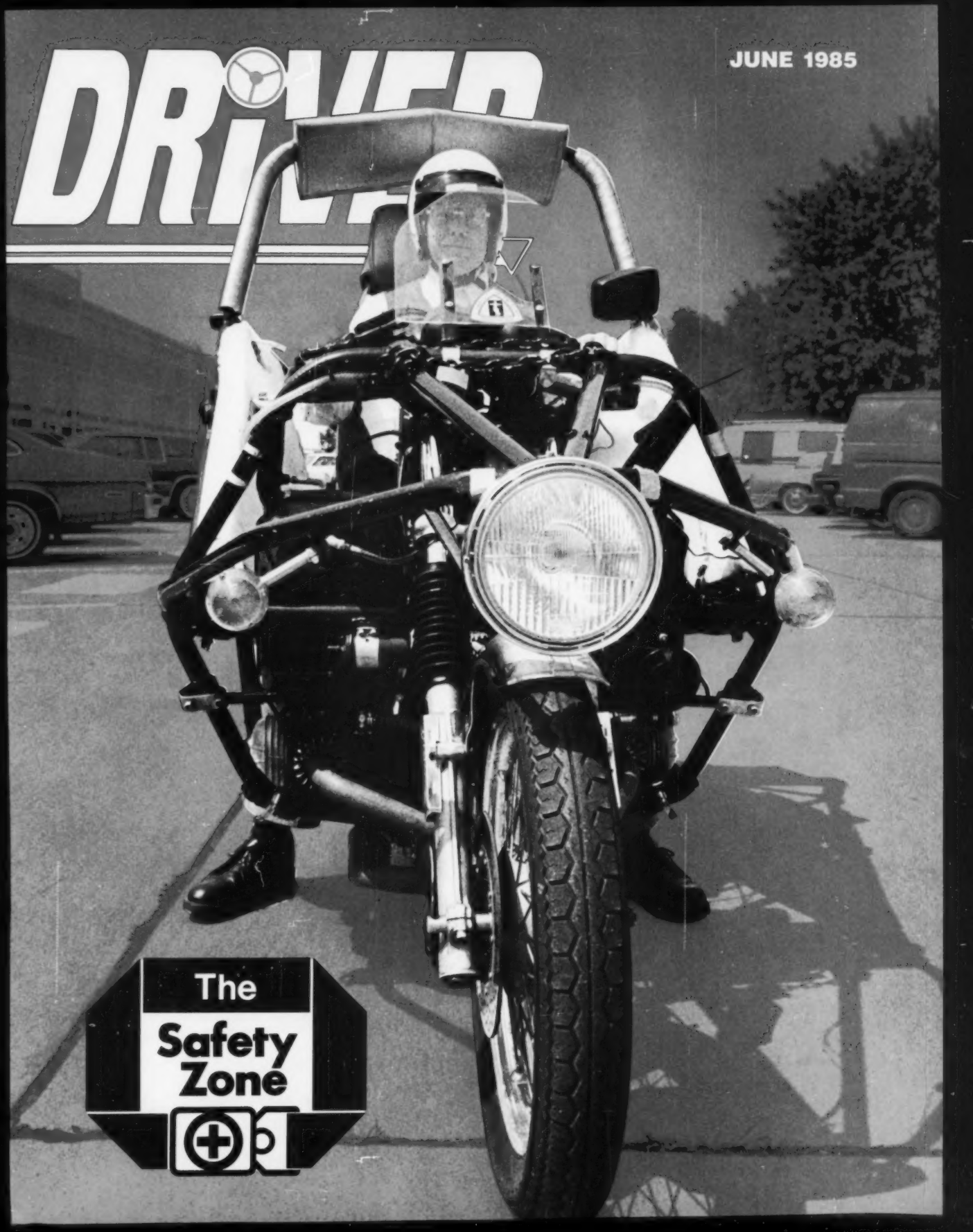
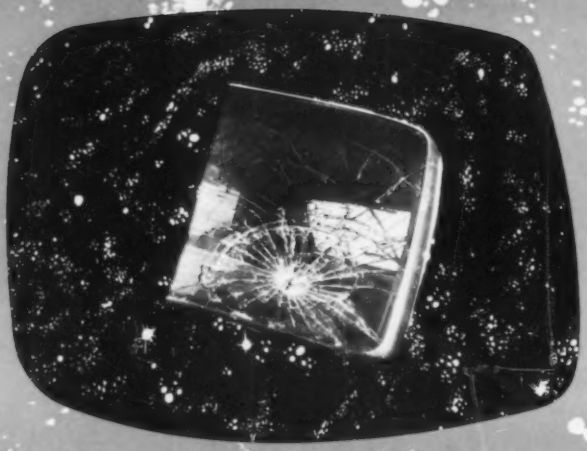
DRIVER

JUNE 1985



The Safety Zone

"You unlock this door with the key of ignition. Beyond it lies a protected area . . .



" . . . an area of sound

" . . . an area of sight

" . . . an area of thought.

"You're moving into a place of both form and function

" . . . of time and space.

"You've just crossed over into . . .

Airman Joe Doe, age 20, an average American driver traveling down an average American street. Joe drives this route every day to work, and usually nothing happens. But today will be different. Today, Joe will have an accident in his car. For the car, the accident will be relatively minor, but for Joe it will be serious, and his survival will depend on his entry into a little-known area that we call . . . the Safety Zone.

The "safety zone" we're talking about is that area within the confines of the automotive seat belt and shoulder harness. Our Airman Joe Doe, being average, never buckles his seat belt when he gets in his car, just like 80 or 90 percent of his countrymen.

Yet, consider these statistics. The National Safety Council has said that seat belts are 50 to 60 percent effective in preventing death and injury in automobile accidents. That means if all drivers and passengers in this country would wear their seat belts at all times 12,000 to 16,000 fewer lives would be lost each year.

Further, the U.S. Department of Transportation estimates that if everyone used passenger restraints at all times:

- the severity of almost four million personal injuries would be reduced each year
- 20 billion dollars in costs incurrred through motor vehicle accidents would be substantially reduced every year and
- the total number of motor vehicle accidents would probably decrease.

Although these are some striking effects, the device that could accomplish them is very simple. The car passenger pulls it across his or her body, fastens it and then forgets about it. It is comfortable, it doesn't interfere with movement, and it always does its job of keeping the passenger within the safety zone.

The trouble is, most people ignore it and remain outside the safety zone. Most surveys done on seat belt usage show only 10 to 15 percent of American motorists buckle their seat belts.

Of course, everyone has the choice to use the seat belt or leave it on the take-up reel. However, each person should be aware of some facts before he or she ignores that special nylon webbing. We want to look at a few different subjects: What seat belts can do *if* they are worn:

continued

DRIVER

The Safety Zone 1

Intersection ESP 12

When Doc Bundy Speaks . . . 24

True Accidents 7

Fighting Complacency 8

The Convincer 9

Still More Driver's License Requirements 10

Timely Topics 11

Vacationing On Somebody Else's Wheels 16

Double Check 22

Five More Crash Tests 23

In The Wind 27

Backfire 28

A Better Mouse Trap Back Cover

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what causes the injuries to people who don't wear them; and a few of the real reasons people have for failure to buckle up.

THE INJURY ZONE

First, the injury story. Injuries to passengers involved in a car crash are caused by what has been called the "second collision," or the "human collision." When an automobile hits something, it crushes in upon itself as it absorbs the force of the impact and then it stops. If the driver and other occupants are not protected in the seat belt's safety zone they will continue to move at the car's pre-collision speed until their bodies are stopped by something. They, too, will crush as they absorb the force of the accident's impact.

The things that will stop the occupants will be the dashboard, steering wheel, windshield, doors, or other parts of the car's interior. Since the human body was not designed for high-speed impact with such hard objects, the people will suffer injury, perhaps even severe injury or death.

The collision of person against car interior is only one kind of human collision. The others are collisions of people with other people and collisions of people with things outside the car.

PERSON-TO-PERSON

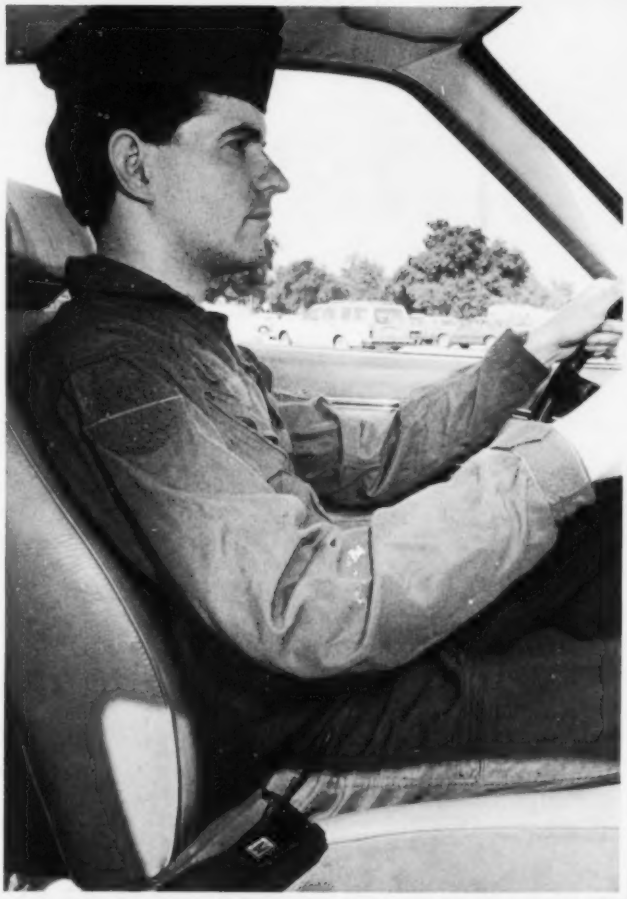
When a car accident occurs, all of the occupants are thrown *toward* the point of impact, depsite what might be expected. Since everyone in the car is moving in the same direction, they collide with each other. These person-to-person collisions also can cause serious injury or death.

When the car has a frontal collision, the passengers in the back seat will be thrown forward into the people in the front seat, perhaps causing serious neck and spinal injuries. Bumping heads with sufficient force could even cause death. During a side collision, one passenger can collide with another and force him or her out a door or window.

A special kind of person-to-person collision is between an adult and a child. Parents often hold their children on their laps as they ride in the car. This is not safe, whether the adults are belted in or not. If the adults are not wearing seat belts, they can be thrown forward, crushing the children between their bodies and the dashboard. Even if they are belted within the safety zone, they cannot hold onto the children in the event of an accident.

Tests using belted-in adults holding 20-pound dummies have proved this. At 30 mph, and even at 15 mph, adults in the test were unable to hold onto the dummies. At 30 mph, a 20-pound child will hit the dashboard with the force of a 300-pound adult.

We add that in crash tests, the people involved expect a crash and they know when it will occur. If they cannot hold on when they know, how could you hold onto your child when you didn't expect the crash?



"Airman Joe Doe, age 20, an average American driver, never buckles his seat belt . . . "

"THROWN CLEAR"

Those people not inside the safety zone of the seat belt commonly collide with objects outside the car — they are thrown completely out of the car. Often, an unbelted passenger will be ejected when the impact causes the doors to spring open, or he or she might be thrown out through a window or the windshield. After this, the car might roll over the person, crushing him or her. Most often, simply the impact with the ground is enough to cause serious injury or death.

Many people have the unfounded (and dangerous) idea that they are safer if they are "thrown clear" of the car during a crash. The fact is this: You are 25 times more likely to be killed if your body leaves the confines of the automobile. Just as the human body was not designed for high-speed impact with a windshield, it was not designed for high-speed impact with the ground or concrete or trees. It is better to stay inside the car.

Of course, the only way to guarantee you will stay inside is by buckling yourself inside the safety zone.

THE WORKS

The modern seat belt and shoulder har-

continued

ness are specially designed for comfort, ease of use and effectiveness. In a crash, or in rapid deceleration, the belts lock up and hold the passenger within the safety zone and away from the doors, the dash and the other passengers.

Today, most seat belt systems are sensitive to the movement of the car. That is, if the car slows rapidly (in a panic stop or a collision) a special pendulum in the mechanism swings and locks the belt. This belt system was designed to give people freedom of movement in the car, and to lock up only when needed. To test this system, drive at a moderate speed on a straight, level, deserted road and hit the brakes hard. The belt will lock up, holding you within the safety zone.

Some older seat belt systems have a reel that is sensitive to any quick movements of the belt itself. If the belt feeds out too fast, the reel will lock up and the belt will stop the passenger from moving. You can test this type by simply jerking sharply on the shoulder harness.

Seat belts are the best restraint system, without exception, because they protect in a collision from any side; and in case of a rollover; and in case of a multiple collision, when the car hits more than one object.

Seat belts do more than keep people within the safety zone and away from the hard car interior parts that will injure them. Seat belts allow people to escape death or injuries by letting them "ride down" the crash impact. Injuries and death result when the person hits a hard surface, absorbing a great amount of force in a short time. For instance, in a car accident at 30 miles per hour, the car will stop in a tenth of a second. An unbelted person in the car will continue to move at 30 mph after the car has stopped fully. The person will collide with something and stop in a hundredth of a second. (See illustration on page 5.)

This difference in time (a tenth of a second as opposed to a hundredth) is significant, because the person will absorb the force of the crash no matter what. It is safer to absorb the force over a longer period of time, just as it is safer to be pushed against a belt rather than smashed against a windshield.

A person who is unrestrained is moving independently of the car, and he or she will hit something hard, absorbing the full force of the impact in only a hundredth of a second. A person who is buckled inside the safety zone becomes, for crash purposes, almost a part of the car seat. He or she slows down *with* the car, or "rides down" the collision, using the full tenth of a second it takes the car to stop.

Seat belts can even help a driver avoid accidents, or at least make them less serious. Does this sound far-fetched? Consider this: In a hard maneuver such as a violent turn to avoid a crash, the body is acted upon by G-forces that can push it away from the wheel. If the driver lost control in a collision, a minor accident could become a major one. So the safety zone helps to hold the driver in place at the controls of the car.

"Today, Joe will have an accident in his car . . . "

LAME EXCUSES

We have explained that seat belts are a life-saving and injury-preventing invention. Now why, if they are such a good thing, do so few people bother to use them? Most non-users have a lot of silly, lame excuses like "They wrinkle my clothes," but what are their real reasons?

Many people are just lazy. They don't want to bother with anything they think will take a little effort. They don't realize that belt usage quickly becomes a habit they will do without thinking. Some people just don't want to think about the chance of having an accident, and so they "tune out" any attempt to get them to use their belts.

But we think the main reason is this: People don't believe they will have an accident. But every week about 900 Americans are killed in traffic accidents. Over 4000 people suffer disabling injuries *every day* in car accidents.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) says "In the next 10 years of normal driving, it's almost a certainty that you will be involved in a motor vehicle accident serious enough to injure or even kill you."

According to annual statistics from the National Safety Council, people in the 15 to 24 age group account for one third or more of the auto accident fatalities each year, yet they make up only 20 percent of the licensed drivers. In 1983, people in that 10-year span accounted for about 14,700 traffic deaths. The 25 to 44 year olds — a 20-year span — had about 14,400 auto deaths that year. The 45 to 64 group, again a 20-year span, had only 6,500 traffic fatalities. This is the reason insurance companies charge younger people with higher rates, because they have a larger risk of accidents than other drivers.

We point out these facts not to make

continued

WITHOUT THE BELT

0.000 seconds - car hits barrier

On impact, the car begins to crush and to slow down. The person inside the car has nothing to slow him down so he continues to move forward inside the car at 30 mph.

0.050 seconds - car crushes

The car slows down as the crushing of the front end absorbs some of the force of the collision. The person inside is still moving forward at 30 mph.

0.100 seconds - car stops 0.120 seconds - person hits car interior

One-fiftieth of a second after the car has stopped, the person slams into the dashboard and windshield. This is the human collision. In the car's collision it takes 1/10 of a second to stop; in the human collision it takes only 1/100 of a second.

WITH THE BELT

On impact, the car begins to crush and to slow down.

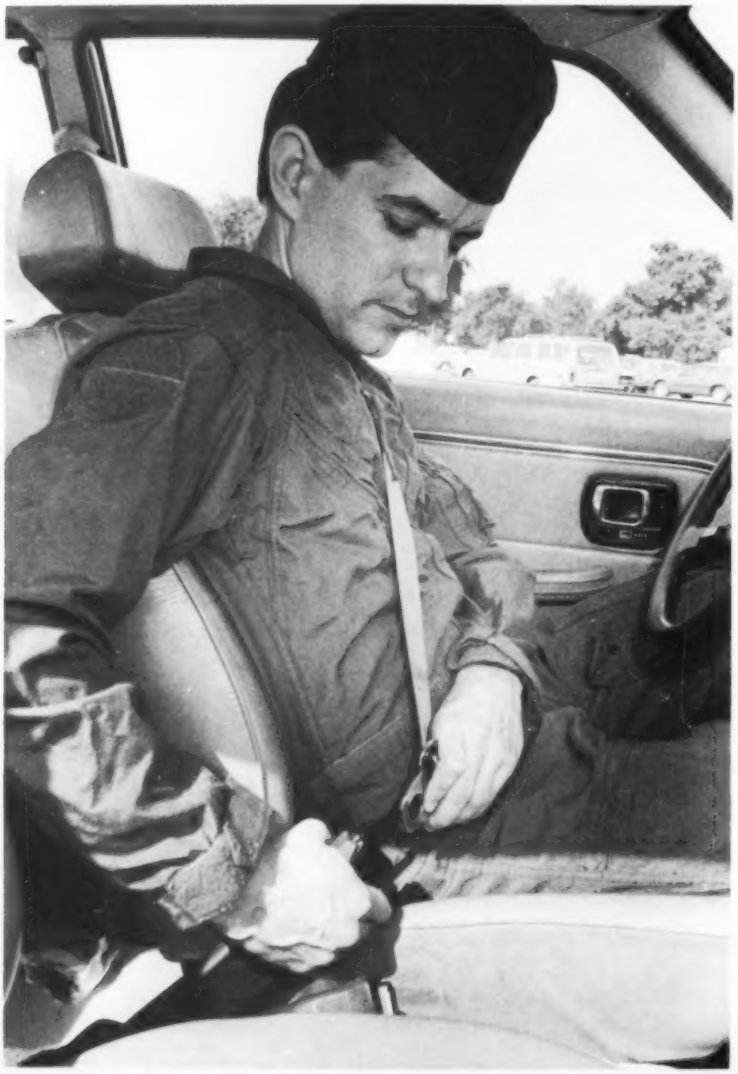
As the car slows down, the person moves forward until the seat belts restrain him. The belts keep him in his seat and keep his head and chest from striking the car interior.

Being fastened to the framework of the car, belted occupants are able to "ride down" the collision as part of the car. They are able to take advantage of the car's slower stop, as it crushes and absorbs energy. For belted people there is no human collision.

drivers, stand a higher chance of accidents (for whatever reasons) and you should consider using your belts. Unfortunately, the only way to convince some people is when they actually have an accident, but that's too late. We want you to use the belts *before* an accident, so you are more likely to survive, and perhaps to avoid the accident altogether.

If you accept that statement about the probability of an accident in the next 10 years, you'll buckle up. You would if you knew what day the accident would happen, but you don't know. So buckle yourself into the safety zone every time you get into the car.

Airman Joe Doe, age 20, an average American driver traveling down an average American street. Today, Joe's ordinary routine will be upset by two facts. One: Joe is on his way to an accident. And two: Joe has decided to go to work a different way. It's the same car and the same road. But Joe has decided to enter a well-known but little-used area, one that will insure his survival. Joe has just gone into . . . The Safety Zone.



"Joe has just gone into . . . The Safety Zone."

The Enforcer

Besides trying to convince people to use seat belts, there is the option of enforcing their use, through mandatory seat belt laws. The Highway Users Federation estimates that 8000 lives would have been saved in 1983 if all states had passed and enforced seat belt laws. The Federation also estimates the laws could have prevented 320,000 injuries and saved $5.4 billion in medical costs, insurance and legal expenses, lost production time, and other costs related to traffic injuries and fatalities.

Currently, New York and New Jersey have seat belt laws on the books, and similar laws will take effect in July in Illinois and Michigan. Other states that have passed laws are Indiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Hawaii and Texas, although the governors of the last two states had not signed the bills as this was being written.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) has ruled that if states containing two-thirds of the U.S. population enact seat belt laws by April 1, 1989, it will not require installation of air bags or automatic seat belts.

As of mid-May 1985, the following states were considering seat belt legislation: Alabama, Alaska, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia. Iowa has postponed consideration of its seat belt law bill until January 1986.

TRUE ACCIDENTS

Following are a few reports of accidents involving Air Force members. We have removed names and references to dates and places.

HIGHWAY SIGN

An airman was driving west at 0715 hours on a four lane highway on his way to a local park where he intended to run. He was planning to take his family to another city to visit a zoo that day, and he was driving to the park before leaving on the trip because he had missed his run the previous day. The weather was clear and the pavement was dry. Ahead was a point where the highway split, two lanes continuing west and two going north. Instead of following either road, the airman's car continued straight ahead and hit a guardrail and then a very large non-breakaway highway sign post. The vehicle's speed was 40 to 50 mph; the speed limit was 55 mph. The airman hit the steering wheel and received massive chest injuries. He died in the hospital at about 0845. A witness was traveling 200 to 300 yards behind the airman and he saw no attempt to stop or avoid the sign. Investigators could find no evidence of either emotional disturbance or fatigue so they determined the airman was inattentive or distracted at the critical point where the highway split. The airman had been known to wear his seat belt frequently, if not always, but he had failed to buckle it for this trip.

AIRBORNE

Two staff sergeants and a technical sergeant were in one car traveling east on a road at 2035 hours near their base. One of the staff sergeants was driving. They were moving at about 80 miles per hour. As they reached an intersection the driver slammed on the brakes so hard he locked the wheels. The car slid broadside across the intersecting street and hit a ditch embankment and some tree stumps. At this point the car went airborne and hit a gas meter. Then it hit a tree at a point five feet above ground level, and another tree eight feet from ground level. It landed on its top, pinning all three men inside. The technical sergeant was treated for injuries and released, the driver was hospitalized and the other staff sergeant died at the scene from massive head injuries.

SPEED, ALCOHOL AND A CURVE

An airman was riding his motorcycle north on a highway, wearing his helmet, gloves and boots. He reached an interchange for an interstate highway and exited, intending to go south. The posted speed limit for the interchange was 30 mph; he was traveling about 74 mph. He lost control and went off the right side of the highway, hitting a raised cement barrier with the front tire. Motorcycle and rider continued about 50 feet against the wall. The airman was then thrown off the cycle and he hit his head on a concrete light pole. He was dead on arrival at the hospital. His Blood Alcohol Level (BAL) was .26, more than two and one half times the legal definition of intoxication.

NOT LISTENING

Two airmen were briefed about safety belt use and about drinking and driving just before they had a break. They took their break and apparently went somewhere to drink. They were on their way back to base at about 2310. About three miles from the base their car left the paved surface of the road, went down a 20-foot embankment and rolled over. The driver wore his seat belt and suffered only minor injuries. The other airman was not wearing his seat belt; he was thrown out of the car and killed. The driver's Blood Alcohol Content was .18.

VERY HIGH SPEED

An airman, his wife and a few friends were playing cards one evening, drinking alcoholic beverages as they played. They all went off to a bar for drinks and returned to the house at 2300 to continue the game and the drinking. Around 0200 the card game broke up and the airman offered to take one of his friends home on his motorcycle. They left at about 0220; both were wearing helmets. At 0225 they were traveling east on a road at about 80 mph. The road had a posted speed limit of 40 mph and they were approaching a sharp right-hand curve with a sign recommending a speed of 20 mph. When the passenger saw the curve he thought they were going too fast, so he signaled the airman by squeezing his right shoulder. The airman slowed the cycle to about 60 mph, but by that time they were already in the curve and had no time to lean into the turn. The motorcycle went across the road and collided with the guardrail. The cycle followed the rail for about 20 feet, then hit a wooden support post, spun around and went another 15 feet where the rear end crashed into the rail. The passenger was thrown over the guardrail and the airman was thrown to the pavement. The motorcycle went over the guardrail and came to rest 75 feet away, still running. The first impact with the guardrail severed the airman's left leg at the hip and broke the left leg of the passenger. The airman had not fastened his chinstrap and his helmet came off during the accident. He died at the scene from severe bleeding as a result of the severed leg. The medical examiner calculated the airman's Blood Alcohol Level at .15. The airman's wife said he was familiar with the bike and the road, because he took her to school every day by that route.

CYCLE/SEMI

A captain was riding his motorcycle to work at 0645 hours, traveling north on a paved road. At an intersection, a southbound semi-tractor trailer turned left in front of him. The motorcycle hit the semi, which then ran over the cycle and rider. The captain was killed instantly. Police determined the semi driver had not yielded right-of-way to the motorcycle.

BEER

An airman got off work at 1600 hours and met a civilian friend. They went to a race track where the airman had three or four beers. At 2315 they arrived at the NCO club where the airman had another beer or two. Just after midnight the civilian brought him home and they went with two other airmen to a local lounge. There the airman had an unknown amount of beer, but his friends said he did not appear drunk. About 0145 the civilian dropped the airman at his home. The airman said he was going to bed, but for some reason he got into his car and drove away at high speed. Fifteen blocks away he lost control on a curve and ran off the road. The car hit a fence post and overturned, coming to rest upside down. The airman's head was pinned between the open sun roof and the ground. He died at the scene. His Blood Alcohol Content was .195 and he had not worn his seat belt.

Fighting Complacency

(from a speech prepared for Wright-Patterson's first Motorcycle Safety Day)

My name is Gary Winn, and I work in the Government Relations Department at the American Motorcyclist Association. I'm here with my wife, Sherry, who quite literally puts together the American Motorcyclist magazine each month, and Ed Youngblood, who is President of the AMA. We're all staff members at the American Motorcyclist Association, which is headquartered in Westerville, on the northeast side of Columbus. We're here to introduce you to Wright Pat's first Motorcycle Safety Day, and to offer a few remarks about motorcycling from our point of view. Speaking for all of us, let me thank you for the kind invitation.

I want to preface my remarks by saying that if you're not an AMA member, you should be. If you take your motorcycling seriously, then a membership is what the doctor ordered. AMA has more benefits than I can easily describe here, and offers a top-rated monthly journal of racing coverage, touring articles and government relations news. You'll read it first in American Motorcyclist and you'll get the details necessary for a serious rider. Ask any of us afterward for information.

I'd like to begin by saying how special Dayton is to me. My father retired here at Wright Pat in 1971 having served 26 years, starting as a groundpounder in the Army and ending up in the Air Force. I served 22 years as a dependent, and a good deal of it here at Wright Pat, working at the base Commissary and the pool at Wood City. I went to Wright State University, right down the road, and found out there's a great big world out there. I had a 250 BSA that leaked oil, swallowed three valves and *hated* 65 mph.

Nobody ever forgets their first bike and I'll never forget my BSA. Mine would, I thought, go faster than anything else on earth. As you can easily see from today's superbikes, I was a bit off on that observation and a couple of others, too. My perspective has been altered by the passage of time.

I started out on that BSA flying around the countryside, to and from Yellow Springs and Xenia and Fairborn; even made it to Lima once, but the bike came back in the trunk of my father's Ford. But who cared if my BSA ate valves? I was having the time of my life, and I was truly learning things about riding, most of them the hard way.

For example, I once tried to hold record albums to the BSA's rear seat with rope; that didn't work. I never learned how to adjust my chain, either, because I never knew I was supposed to. And when I got the bike, it came with a cracked helmet that was held together with stove bolts coming out of the side, like little electrodes. That wasn't any good, either, but I was still an enthusiast of the highest order.

Not long afterward, a friend convinced me to join the AMA, and in 1971 I began learning better ways to do things. I got rid of the BSA, and got a serious motorcycle that I still have. I quickly saw, while I still lived right here in Dayton, that I had better get serious about safety if I was going to survive. I thought a lot about it, especially after a racing friend was killed in 1972.

Now it's 15 years later, and things have changed for the better. Wright Pat has over 1,800 registered motorcycles, and last year reported no fatalities, and only one single lost-time motorcycle accident. It's a damned fine record, and all of you here are the reason. Somebody is taking their biking seriously. In the 15 years I've been gone, Wright Pat has added a Better Biking Program, and a second version of the Motorcycle Off-Street Test, called the MOST II. Motorcycle safety is coming of age at Wright Pat.

Your base Safety Officer says the accident history is getting better at Wright Pat, and I commend you all. But please, please don't fall into the trap of complacency. Always consider yourself as young and enthusiastic and just as much in need of improvement as I was 15 years ago with a bolted together helmet and a chain that was never adjusted. Don't get complacent. Complacency kills motorcyclists.

Whether you're flying, riding or just walking around, you have to consider the question of your safety "margin," which means pushing down the probabilities of injury, and pushing up the probabilities of a safe, enjoyable trip. It's an active process and requires constant adjustment. Maintaining margin can be subconscious when you're walking around, but like flying, riding a motorcycle means constantly adjusting those probabilities. Adjusting your margin.

I would like to close with a passage from an article in the June American Motorcyclist. If you're a pessimist and see the world as a glass half empty, then you won't like this passage. But if you're an optimist, you'll see that because you're personally in charge of your motorcycling, you are the only one who can make a successful safe trip out of a potentially dangerous one. You are the adjuster of the margin.

The article starts with a letter from Renate, the fiancee of Hannes, a motorcycle enthusiast recently killed in Austria. She's writing to Tom, a friend of Hannes in the country. In broken English, Renate tells Tom: "We rode brisk from our loved home town, through the splendid Vienna Woods, then on the

Sudautobahn to Graz. We were excited by the sunny and warm morning, thinking of adventures ahead, and personal thoughts. We played tag to each other, spurt playful ahead of turns. We felt that we were riding road racers in spite the bikes and bags weight. Hannes passed around a long truck, and I pass a few seconds later. I saw the truck stopping at the same time I saw his bike hit the steel rail.

"He did not forever lose consciousness until Friday evening, five days later. I must tell you, Tom. His leather touring boots did not prevent to break an ankle, his full riding leathers did not prevent broken ribs to puncture his spleen and one lung, his helmet split in two pieces and did not prevent his jaw to break in two pieces and his skull to fracture. Still I cannot talk to others about the sight. Or about the five days I spent with him. To the moment when the doctors said to me, he was dead."

Later, Tom reflects on the experience of his friends Renate and Hannes. He writes: "The thought occurred to me that perhaps all of us are dealing with a problem of margin. Margin is like oxygen. We have it in abundance and take it for granted . . . right up to the instant when we realize it has run out."

Tom continues: "And I'll be riding, forevermore, with a hunch. It's an unprovable hunch, and I'd like to leave it that way. But I know I was once the type of rider who pulled really dumb stunts like neglecting my helmet or having a couple of beers after hours. Hannes may not have been so stupid, but he may nevertheless have to accept ultimate responsibility for his own accidental death. Hannes was more inexperienced than he honestly, sincerely believed himself to be."

And that's what I'd like to leave you with; a warning against complacency. No matter how many miles you've ridden. Sometimes, I like to think I've learned all there is to know about motorcycling. After all, I deal with safety on a daily basis. I read about riding and racing and the government's involvement in motorcycling. But I know at a gut level I can never allow myself to become so casual, so jaded that I neglect my own margin. When I'm being complacent, then I'm content to tool down the road with the wind in my face — not a care in the world, ignoring my margin. When I'm being *smart*, I'm *still* the 22 year old kid with a bolted-together helmet and an unadjusted chain but a lot of enthusiasm for learning. I think that's how I'd rather be.

THE CONVINCER

They call it "The Convincer," which is an appropriate name. It consists of a seat, equipped with a safety belt and shoulder harness, mounted on rails that provides a short 12-foot ride and a very sudden stop. The device gives the rider an idea of the impact of a crash at about seven miles per hour.

The results of this particular demonstration surprised Airman Matt Proietti. "I thought it would be fun," he said.

He was convinced of the need for seat belts in even a slow-speed crash. So should you be.

FINAL SERIES!

Driver's License Requirements in the USA

RHODE ISLAND

Nonresident's license honored on reciprocal basis; visitor's permit not required. Operator's license must be purchased within 30 days if residence is established.

Resident military personnel may secure special operator's license issued in exchange for valid Rhode Island license at no cost. Special license good for term of service and 30 days thereafter. Nonresident military personnel may use home state driver's license if home state vehicle registration is maintained.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Nonresident permitted to use home state operator's license indefinitely as long as he maintains a permanent resident address in the state or country of which he holds a valid and current operator's license. To legally drive, military personnel must maintain a valid, unexpired driver's license at all times. If stationed outside of the state and unable to appear to secure a renewal, military personnel may renew by mail one time only by completing the appropriate forms, available from the Department. Out-of-state military personnel holding a valid license issued by resident state permitted to drive in South Carolina.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Nonresident license honored on reciprocal basis; visitor's permit not required. Operator's license must be purchased within 90 days if residence is established.

Special licensing arrangement for resident military personnel. Military personnel with valid South Dakota license on entry into service may use license until 30 days after honorable discharge while absent from the state, unless license suspended or revoked. Licensee must have discharge or separation papers in immediate possession.

Nonresident military personnel stationed in South Dakota may use home state driver's license.

TENNESSEE

Nonresident must obtain Tennessee driver's license within 90 days after establishing residency. Visitor's permit not required.

Resident military personnel with valid Tennessee licenses on entry into service may use license until 60 days after honorable discharge. Licensee must have discharge or separation papers in immediate possession.

Nonresident military personnel and dependents may use home state driver's licenses if home state vehicle registrations are retained.

TEXAS

Nonresident's operator's license honored for 30 days after residence is established. Nonresident military personnel and members of immediate family may use home state driver's license. Validity periods for military personnel with Texas driver's licenses extended for 90 days after discharge or return to Texas.

UTAH

License must be purchased immediately if Utah residence is established. Also, must be licensed in Utah if driver accepts employment and comes from a state which has not adopted Driver License Compact; otherwise, permitted to use home state operator's license as a visitor for 60 days.

Military personnel having Utah license at time of entry into service may use such license until 90 days after discharge. Nonresident military personnel may use home state driver's license.

VERMONT

Nonresident operator's license honored on reciprocal basis, but not to exceed six months; visitor's permit not required.

Military personnel who are residents of Vermont with valid Vermont license when entering service, may continue to use license until 30 days after discharge. However, the license must be renewed four years from date of expiration. Nonresident military personnel may use home state driver's license.

VIRGINIA

Persons employed and residing in Virginia may lawfully operate motor vehicles in Virginia on home state license for 30 days.

Licenses of Virginia military personnel on active duty outside state valid until six months after discharge. Extension shall not exceed four years from the date of expiration of license.

Nonresident military personnel, spouse and dependent child not less than sixteen years of age may use home state driver's license.

WASHINGTON

Nonresident is permitted to use home state operator's license in Washington. Immediately upon establishing residence, must secure Washington license. Visitor's permit not required.

Nonresident military personnel may use home state license with either home state vehicle registration or state of Washington vehicle registration.

Resident military personnel may use license until 90 days after honorable separation from service.

WEST VIRGINIA

Nonresident is permitted to use his home state operator's license for 30 days on reciprocal basis; visitor's permit not required. Also reciprocal if nonresident obtains employment and enters children in local school; does not apply after temporary residence exceeds 30 days.

Military personnel with valid West Virginia license upon entry into service may use such license until six months after honorable discharge.

Nonresident military personnel may use home state driver's license if home state vehicle registration is retained.

WISCONSIN

Nonresident operator's license honored on reciprocal basis; visitor's permit not required. License must be obtained immediately if residence is established. Reciprocal with regard to transient workers.

Military personnel with valid Wisconsin license on entry into service whose license expires while in service, may apply for renewal license for fee of $9. A military doctor may conduct vision exam if required. Nonresident military personnel may use home state driver's license. Wisconsin military personnel cannot operate a motor vehicle on expired Wisconsin driver's license.

WYOMING

Nonresident permitted to use his home state operator's license to drive in Wyoming. Operator's license must be secured within 30 days if gainful employment is accepted or residence established.

Resident military personnel temporarily out of state may obtain special license valid without photograph. Department may also extend the expiration dates on current driver licenses of resident military personnel and dependents residing with the military person for a period of three years. Nonresident military personnel may use home state driver's license.

DO SEAT BELT LAWS MEET DOT CRITERIA?

Since neither New York's or New Jersey's mandatory seat belt laws meet Transporation Secretary Dole's strict enforcement standards, neither state may qualify in the race to prevent automakers from having to install air bags in cars. During 1984 Dole said the federal air bag timetable would be rescinded if states accounting for two-thirds of the nation's population enact mandatory seat belt laws by April 1, 1989. Since New Jersey's law carries a fine of less than $25 and according to the New York law, motorists may buckle their shoulder strap behind them, neither law may meet Dole's stringent mandatory seat belt law criteria. The U.S. Department of Justice will wait to see if enough states pass seat belt laws before taking a position on the New York or New Jersey legislation.

PROPERLY INFLATED TIRES SAVE MONEY

Air is as important to the life of an automobile tire as oil is to the life of an engine, says the Automotive Information Council (AIC). In fact, keeping the correct amount of air in your tires is probably the least expensive maintenance chore you can do for your car. Underinflation of a tire can cut tread life, reduce fuel economy and cause vehicle handling problems.

Improper air pressure in the tire reduces tread life because the sidewalls flex too much, creating a build-up of heat. Properly inflated tires simply roll easier, and can significantly improve poor gas mileage. And underinflation in one or more tires can cause handling problems, causing the car to drift to one side. These handling problems can be magnified during emergency braking on slick surfaces, causing a real safety hazard.

Regular use of an accurate tire pressure gauge is important. Tire pressure gauges can be purchased for just a few dollars in auto, hardware and department stores. Always inflate tires to at least the pressure recommended by the vehicle manufacturer (you'll find the recommendation in the owner's manual). This information is also usually listed inside your car's glove compartment or on the driver's door post. Never exceed the maximum allowable air pressure marked on the sidewall of the tires.

Some motorists check the tire pressure by just looking at the tire to see if it appears low. Unfortunately, this won't work if your car has radial tires. Radials have a natural appearance of being low and it's next to impossible to guess at whether radial tires are properly inflated. Use your tire gauge; it'll soon pay for itself.

All tires, regardless of their construction, lose air over a period of time and should be checked every couple of weeks. When you check the tire inflation, remember to look for excessive tire wear, cuts and stones in the treads.

DOT PROPOSES STANDARD TO REDUCE MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT

Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Hanford Dole has announced a proposed standard which would help reduce motor vehicle theft by requiring a marking system for the major parts of frequently stolen vehicles.

Cars are frequently stolen and cut into parts that are subsequently resold to repair shops. Once these parts are separated from the vehicles, which are already required to have a vehicle identification number (VIN) plate and numbered engine and transmission, law enforcement officials can no longer establish that the parts were stolen.

The proposed theft prevention standard would require that the vehicle identification number, or a derivative thereof (i.e., some subset of the VIN's 17 characters), be inscribed or affixed on major parts of certain new motor vehicles. Each new vehicle manufactured for sale in the United States is currently required to have a VIN affixed to it. NHTSA asked for comments on whether manufacturers should employ the full 17 character VIN or the derivative. Replacement parts are proposed to be marked with an "R" and a manufacturer's logo.

The agency has developed three alternate proposals regarding the parts to be marked on the designated vehicles. All three options include 12 parts; the engine, transmission, right front fender, left front fender, hood, left front door, right front door, front bumper, rear bumper, left rear quarter panel, right rear quarter panel, and decklid (the tailgate or hatchback, whichever is present). The first option consists of marking these 12 parts only; option two would provide for the manufacturer to propose two additional parts to the agency for its approval; and option three would have the agency specify the two additional parts.

Under the proposal, manufacturers would be required in model year 1987 to begin marking certain major parts in frequently stolen models. NHTSA will establish a list of such vehicles by October 1985. Cost of compliance with the theft standard should not exceed $15 per motor vehicle, and NHTSA anticipates that all manufacturers will be able to comply with the standard for less than that amount.

SHOULD YOU BUY OR LEASE YOUR NEXT CAR?

Consumers looking for a way to reduce their monthly auto costs or trying to figure out how to get more car for their dollar may want to consider leasing their next car, says the Automotive Information Council (AIC).

Leasing generally requires smaller monthly payments than financing the same new car. Many consumers find they can drive a newer or more luxurious auto than they would otherwise. Another advantage includes elimination of the down payment on a new car purchase.

However, when the leasing contract runs out, the person leasing the car does not own it and it can't be used for trade-in on a new car. Still, some leasing contracts contain a clause that gives the lessee the option to buy the car at the end of the lease.

There are two basic types of leases. The first is called an open-end lease. It usually has the lowest monthly payments, but the person leasing the car will be liable for additional payments at the end of the contract if the car is not worth the amount stated in the lease. The Consumer Leasing Act limits the maximum liability in the final payment to three times the average monthly payment, if the car is returned in good condition.

The other kind of lease is called closed-end or walk-away. Payments are generally slightly higher than open-end leases and the consumer does not have to make up the difference if the car sells for less than was expected at the end of the lease.

In both types of leases the consumer usually pays the maintenance and repairs for the auto and must stay within the mileage limits stated in the lease or pay additional payments to cover these costs.

INTERSECTION

esp

Common sense and caution will help those not blessed with clairvoyance.

We heard recently about an intersection in a major city that had experienced a lot of accidents. The police discovered that on every forth cycle, the lights were green in all directions.

That's a pretty extreme situation, but believe this: Intersections are dangerous all the time. National Safety Council statistics for 1981 to 1983 show that over 48 percent of all traffic accidents, both urban and rural, happened at intersections. (45 percent were collisions between two or more cars.) Perhaps intersections are confusing to a lot of drivers, or perhaps too many drivers take chances with cross traffic.

These facts and that faulty light problem suggest that not only are intersections dangerous places, but you have to take responsibility for your own life and health, and not trust someone or some*thing* else.

It would be nice to have a little extrasensory perception (ESP to you acronym fans) to help us predict the movements of the other motorists. If we could read other drivers' minds we could eliminate a lot of the risk of driving. Unfortunately, precise mind-reading is difficult in the car, without a free hand for the cards or the crystal ball.

But you can do the next best thing, which is being prepared for *anything*. You can do that by sticking close to the right-of-way rules yourself and keeping on your toes — or rather, keeping your toes ready to go from the gas to the brakes. (The rules we present here are for driving in the U.S. Members stationed overseas will find the local laws different in many cases; check with the authorities.)

RIGHT-OF-WAY RULES

The right-of-way rules are based on common sense, to take away the need for mind-reading. They allow ease of movement with a minimum of hassle. Let's take a few examples.

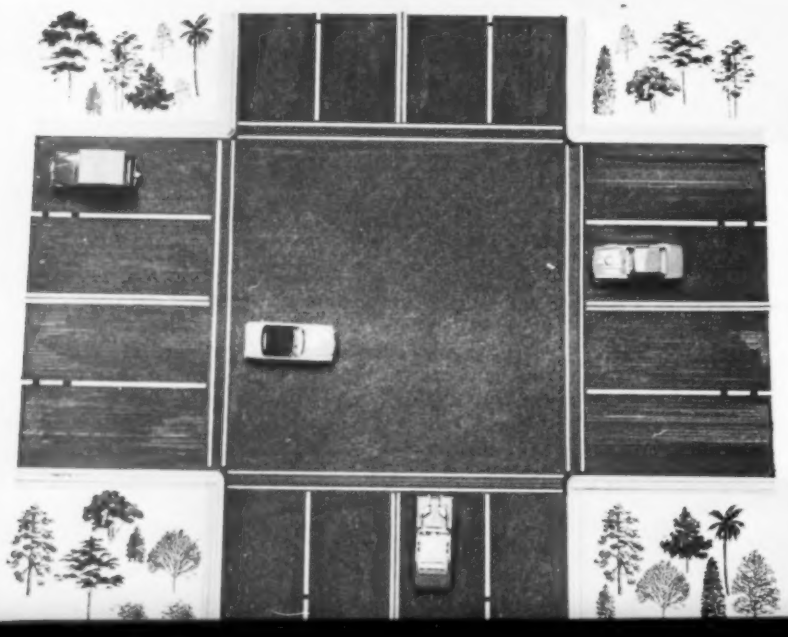
If two cars on crossing streets approach an intersection with no signs or signals, the first one at the intersection goes through first.

If they both arrive at the same time, the car on the right moves first. (If you have trouble remembering that, think of the expression "RIGHT-of-way." This is the only rule that is more or less arbitrary.)

When there are stop signs for both streets, both rules apply — first there, first through, and in case of a tie the one on the right has the right-of-way.

When there is a stop sign for only one of the streets, the person stopping at the

At uncontrolled intersections, the first car at the corner moves first. The car to the right moves first if both arrive at the same time. Of course, they must yield to cars already in the intersection.

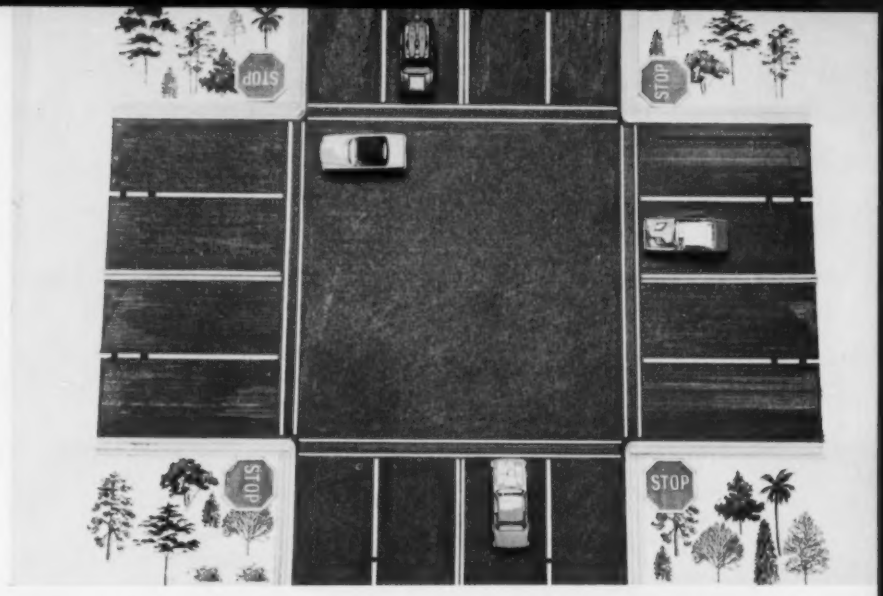


sign must wait for anyone who is close enough to be a hazard before moving into the intersection.

The same rules apply when one is making a turn. If there is a stop sign for one street, the person at the sign must wait until nobody is close enough to be a hazard before turning. If there is a fourway stop, the first one there goes, even if he or she is the one making the turn.

"Okay," you say. "Rules are fine. But what if the other guy doesn't want to obey them?" Establish eye contact with the other driver at an intersection so you know whether you are seen. That may not be as good as reading the other's mind, but if there is eye contact, one of the drivers can wave the other through first in case of any confusion.

However, no matter what the signs say, no matter what the rules say, don't *take* the right-of-way. If you think you should move and the other driver thinks he or she should, you could have an accident unless one of you can read the other's mind. The overriding rule of driving is "Move only when it is safe to do so."



At four-way-stop intersections, the same two rules apply — the first car at the intersection goes first, and the one to the right moves if two arrive at the same time.

SEE THE LIGHT

If you think it's hard to read people's minds, try predicting a stoplight. Machines are not infallible, as shown in the example at the start of this article, so common sense is important even when an intersection is controlled by traffic lights. Most people assume the green light means "go," the yellow light means "caution," and the red light means "stop." That's close, but not quite correct. Red does mean "stop," but the others are a little more complicated.

The green light means "go as soon as it's safe." If you move as soon as the light changes, you might collide with someone who was trying to get through the intersection on the end of the yellow light.

The yellow light means "stop if you can do so safely." Obviously, if the light changes to yellow just as you reach the intersection, you should proceed rather than screeching to a stop. But if you have sufficient space, you should treat a yellow light just like a red one and stop. (We won't talk about those who think yellow means "floor it.")

Some drivers will enter the intersection for a left turn and then complete the turn on the yellow light after the opposing traffic has cleared or stopped. This is okay if they entered before the light turned red.

It is especially important to be able to read traffic signals when they are flashing. Sometimes the lights are malfunctioning, and sometimes they are set that way by the city at a less used intersection, for instance at night or at a fairground not currently being used. Here is what the colors mean.

Usually the lights will flash red for one street and yellow for the cross-street. A light that is flashing red should be treated like a stop sign — stop, and then proceed when it is safe. A flashing yellow light means slow down for the intersection. Drivers facing a flashing yellow light have the right-of-way, but they should slow down and proceed with caution.

An intersection with lights flashing red in all directions, or one where the lights are out, should be treated like an intersection with four-way stop signs.

A TURN FOR THE WORSE?

When you make a turn, be in the proper lane before you reach the intersection so others don't have to read *your* mind. As you make the turn, move into the nearest lane of the cross street — the left lane for left turns, and the right lane for right turns — if possible. Turning into other lanes is legal is some places but it can put you in the way of other cars.

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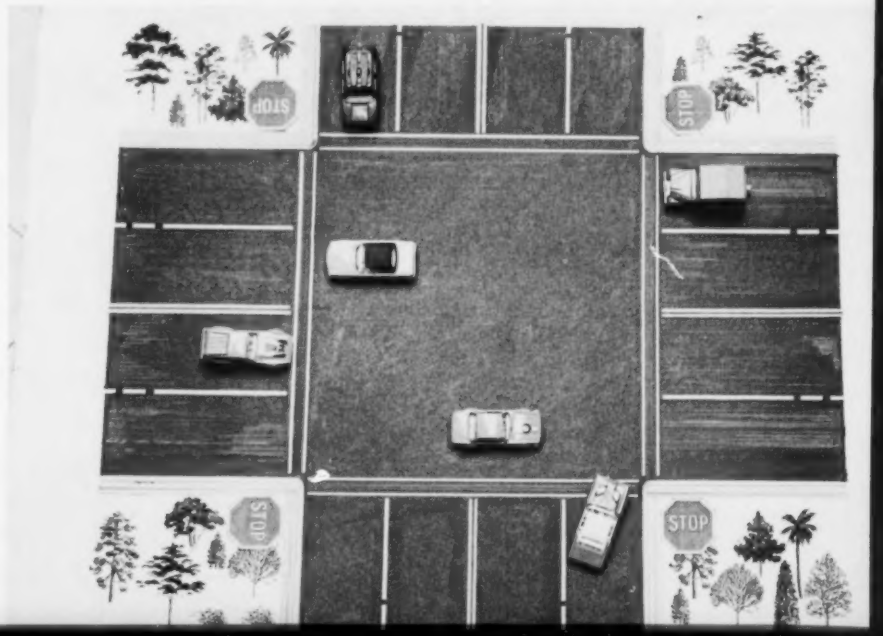
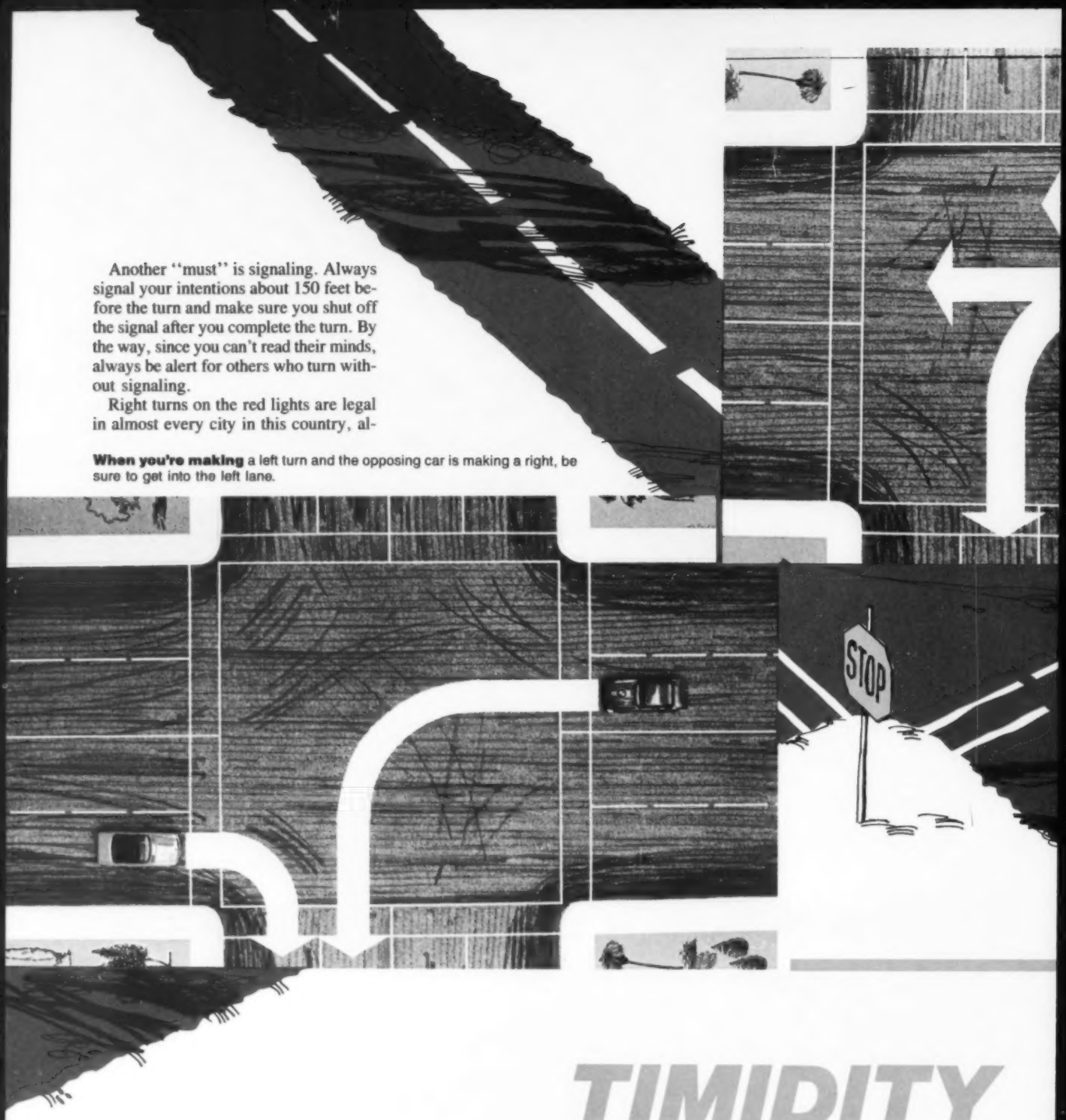
Any driver who is making a turn must wait for traffic to clear before attempting the turn.





Another "must" is signaling. Always signal your intentions about 150 feet before the turn and make sure you shut off the signal after you complete the turn. By the way, since you can't read their minds, always be alert for others who turn without signaling.

Right turns on the red lights are legal in almost every city in this country, al-

When you're making a left turn and the opposing car is making a right, be sure to get into the left lane.

TIMIDITY

A message from An Average Driver

There are several ways to go at any intersection. When you turn, go into the near lane.

though some allow it only where a sign specifically permits it and others allow it anywhere a sign doesn't specifically prohibit it.

Don't do a right turn on red maneuver the same way you would do a "yield." You must come to a complete stop at the intersection before you turn and, of course, you must move only when it is safe to do so.

If U-turns are allowed where you live, watch two things. First, wait until all traffic is out of the way, including through traffic and those turning. Second, make sure you make your turn tight enough to avoid the opposite curb and parked cars. Not all streets are wide enough to accommodate the turning radius of a large American sedan.

FINAL WORDS

At any intersection, remember those who are more vulnerable than you are in your car. Pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcyclists also have a right to use the intersection, and they are no more predictable than the automobiles.

For this reason, and all those listed above, never speed through intersections. In fact, since they are so dangerous, always slow a little as you approach them. Even if you can legally go through without stopping, on a green light or on a street with no stop sign, you never know when someone else might decide to run the light or stop sign. Or the green light could change to yellow sooner than you expected. Or a pedestrian could dart in front of you.

Since none of us have ESP and we never *really* know what to expect at an intersection, be ready for anything. Sooner or later you might find one of those tricky green-for-all intersections.

When I drive I am not very patient, and some things really burn me. One of these is timidity. When someone else is overly cautious or unsure of how to proceed, I get annoyed.

It's not that I am hard and tough. I just can't stand timid people in cars. You've all seen them. They come to a four-way stop and they wait. And they wait. They let car after car proceed through the intersection and then they begin to get visibly flustered. So you start out into the intersection, figuring the right-of-way has been given to you. Instead, they start out, too. You stop; they stop. You start; they start.

The only thing I can figure is this: They don't have the nerve to move and they let several other cars go, thinking they are being "polite." After a few cars have gone, they tell themselves, "Well, I think I have let just about enough people move! Now maybe they'll let me have a turn."

The people behind them get very angry at this, and why not? They are left waiting for these people who are afraid to move. The people at the other corners get annoyed too, because they don't know what to expect from these gutless wonders. When will they move? Will they move at all?

You see, there are *rules* for this sort of thing. You move from the stop in the same order that you arrived there. By not taking their turn, these wimps mess up the whole system. It takes them a long time to dredge up enough courage to put their foot on the gas. By that time, those around them are so annoyed they just want to get away.

They should realize that nobody really wants to hit them. All everybody really wants is to get through the intersection and on their way. Everyone will get his or her chance to move; they just need to take their turn and not be overly "polite."

So the timid ones should get with the program. If they know the rules and obey them like everybody else, they'll make it easier on all of us.

Vacationing on Somebody Else's Wheels

The vacation is all set: Disneyland, a visit with that favorite uncle in the mountains, a night in Palm Springs, some time on a dude ranch in Arizona and the sights of Tucson. The problem is that driving the family car from Bogota, N.J., to the West Coast would eat up the time and leave none for the actual holiday. So the idea is to fly there and rent a car.

Rent-a-car vacations aren't much different than any other holiday involving motor vehicles: They all require planning to be successful and safe.

The Disneyland, mountains, Palm Springs, dude ranch and Tucson route is just the tip of a good plan. You need to get involved in details.

Once you know how long you have for the entire vacation less the periods you

One hidden advantage to renting your vacation wheels is that you may get to drive a vehicle completely different from your everyday transportation such as a Chevrolet Nova, Mercury Sable station wagon, Renault Alliance convertible or a Ford Aerostar.

want to spend at each activity you have some idea of how much time is left for the actual traveling. Just because there's only 368 miles between Los Angeles and Phoenix, doesn't mean that the trip can be made in less than eight hours at 50 miles per hour. Stops have to be added in. Stops for meals, gasoline and just plain rest.

Eight hours on the road is plenty. That eight hours includes stops for food, fuel and rest. Now break the driving down into blocks of not more than two hours at a time. That's enough time to spend behind the wheel in one sitting. Then a good 10 to 20 minute break out of the car is necessary before you get back in and drive off. Ideally, the second break would be for a meal and the fourth would mark the end of the day at your destination.

Also in that eight hours include any flying time. For example, on the first day you're going to spend about an hour getting from Bogota to the airport and another hour standing in line, checking in and waiting to board the flight. If the 9 a.m. flight leaves on time and arrives on time around 1 p.m. that's another seven hours of traveling (don't forget the three hour time change between coasts). As you can see, that's already nine hours of traveling and you haven't even picked up your baggage or the rent-a-car. So it might only be two in the afternoon when you drive out of the rent-a-car agency lot but you've already abused your body to the tune of 10 hours "on the road."

So for planning purposes you'd want to write off the first day (and the last) to air travel only and spend the rest of the day relaxing by the pool at the motel next to the airport as well as adjusting to the time change. After all, it may only be three in the afternoon, but your body which started out in Bogota thinks it's six in the evening and you've been on the go since six this morning.

You can use similar planning for the rest of the trip. An hour's drive to Disneyland for the second day. An hour or so to get to Uncle Eugene's in the mountains, then a couple of hours in the afternoon to get to Palm Springs. A full day's drive to the dude ranch. *continued*

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Of course, once you have an idea of how many miles are involved along with the number of days, you'll have a better idea of what rental car company rate offers you the best deal. For help with this, and to make the reservations, go to your installation's Scheduled Airline Ticket Office (SATO).

One tip for helping keep the rental car rate down is to check with your insurance company to see if the deductible is covered by your current policy. It's too late to think about this when you're at the car rental agency's counter and they tell you that unless you sign-up for their special "insurance" you're going to have to pay for the first $2,500 in damages. This special "insurance" can double the cost of renting a car.

Take advantage of rest areas to keep yourself refreshed during long drives. Stop at least every two hours for an out-of-the-car break of 10 to 20 minutes.

No matter whose car you're driving, the two-second following rule applies. If you can't count "one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two" between when the rear of that pick-up truck passes under the sign and when the front of your car gets there, you're too close.

Once the paper work is done at the counter it's time to take delivery of the vehicle. Go over the rental vehicle as carefully as you would a vehicle you are buying.

Don't shrug your shoulders and say, "If it breaks, it's their problem." It very well might be the company's problem to get the vehicle running again; but that will be of little solace to you if you're without a moving vehicle between Quartsize and Tonopah.

It should go without saying, but here goes anyway: Check the engine oil, transmission fluid, brake fluid, radiator coolant, battery electrolyte and power steering fluid before driving the vehicle away. And don't forget to check the tire pressures. As a rule they are never correct.

In other words: Follow the check lists provided in the May 1985 DRIVER.

Next, read the vehicle's owner's manual and operate everything according to the instructions. It's not fun to run into a sudden, blinding rain shower and spend five minutes fumbling for the wiper switch only to find out they don't work.

Once you've adjusted the seat to your comfort, adjusted the mirrors, put on your safety belts and made sure all your passengers are buckled up, you're ready for that first day's short drive to the motel.

The next day the plan is to get up early enough to be at Disneyland just as it opens. But don't press it; the amusement park isn't going anywhere. You aren't familiar with the local roads and the way local drivers aim their vehicles. Neither are you used to the way your rented vehicle handles.

Take your time. Get a feeling for the rental vehicle and watch out for the local traffic. On the expressways you can't go too wrong by sticking to the national speed limit of 55 mph and staying in the right hand lanes.

Remember all the talk of planning earlier? Well it still applies to the daily driving. At the rental agency, at the motel, at restaurants, ask questions about getting to where you're going. Many of the people you deal with will have tips on how to avoid the local traffic problem areas as well as pointers to help you locate exits, turns and points of interest.

When you come out of Disneyland long after the sun has gone down, remember

that rented vehicle isn't the same old family transportation that you've been driving for the past two years. Also, relax a little before taking off. You've had a long day in the park and you are tired. Besides, you and your family have had enough rides for the day. Don't turn the parking lot into a slalom course or drag race from traffic light to traffic light on your way to the expressway and back to the motel. It may be somebody else's car but that's no excuse to abuse it.

Of course, the best of plans often don't work exactly as laid out so you must be prepared to deal with sudden changes.

For example, when you first made your plans, you called Uncle Eugene to arrange to drop by and see him. When you arrived, you called to confirm that you were coming. And you called again last night to get directions and confirm approximately when you would be arriving.

After spending more than two hours following Uncle Eugene's directions to the letter on what he said was a 40-minute trip you arrive at his mountain cabin only to find that he's not home.

You should have known something was wrong when after 30 minutes of driving you still couldn't see any mountains through the Southern California smog. You should have known something was funny with the directions when you spent 20 minutes following three garbage trucks down a narrow tarmacadam road. You should have gotten the hint that your Uncle didn't want to see you when the garbage trucks turned off the road to the dump, and the road suddenly dropped off into a ravine and turned from slick, sun-melted tar into dirt. Not gravel, but dirt!

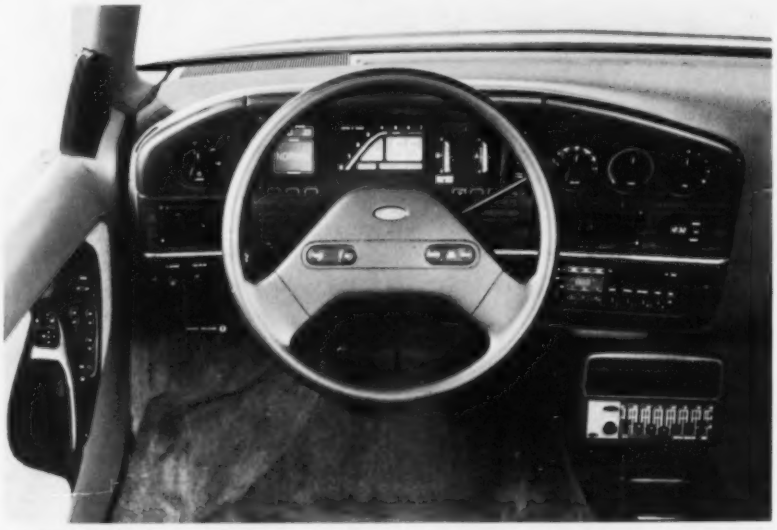
And why you didn't give up and head for Palm Springs when his route finally dropped you back onto the same expressway you exited off 26.5 miles earlier is beyond reason.

Anyway, at this point your plans need adjustment. You've been driving all morning and not really gotten anywhere. It's well past lunch time and in addition to the fact that Uncle Eugene isn't going to invite you in to eat, there doesn't appear to be any place at 6,030 feet elevation for you to get a bite.

The thing to remember at this point is: Slow down and relax. This is a vacation; you're supposed to be having fun and taking it easy.

This is especially true on mountain roads — roads that you don't know. Go slow. Be cautious on all curves. Turn the headlights on. If the corners get really tight and blind, sound the horn before you go around them.

A meal of barbecued ribs and chicken with hot cheesed-scalloped potatoes, corn bread, three-bean salad, apple pie and wine may be part of your vacation plans, but not for lunch. Light noontime meals are better when you're still facing an afternoon drive.



A steady 55 mph pace will produce the best fuel economy and help you arrive on time and safely.

You've decided to head directly down the hill on the shorter route you've found on the map. Again, go slow. You can't make up the lost time. All you can do is relax and enjoy the scenery. Use the same gears going down a hill that you would use to climb it.

There, that wasn't so bad. In 18 miles and less than half a hour you're back to the main expressway route to Palm Springs and there's plenty of places to eat: Wendy's, Carl's Jr., Burger King, Taco Bell and Foster's Donuts.

After lunch it should be a simple 70-mile dash to the Palm Springs resort motel. But again, be flexible in your plans. That meal of burger, fries and cola might not sit as well as a light sandwich, fruit, or a salad, calling for an emergency stop along the way.

Again, don't rush to make up the lost time just to keep to a planned schedule. Proper planning will have included guaranteeing a late arrival at the resort when the reservations were made months ago.

The next major portion of the trip is to

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the dude ranch in Wickenburg, Ariz. The plan is to leave early in the morning to avoid the heat of the day in the desert. You figure if you leave at 7 a.m. you might make it most of the way before being forced to use the air conditioner. With the windows cranked up early in the morning, you could even stretch the gas mileage figures beyond the EPA rating for the car and save yourself some out-of-the-pocket cash on gasoline.

But don't try to stretch each gasoline gallon too far. Going too far includes driving straight through without taking a break at least every two hours. Keeping the windows rolled up, the air conditioning off, the vents closed and all the passengers stripped down to their underclothes is also going too far in search of an extra mile per gallon. Little tricks such as following semi-trailers with your front bumper under their rear gate and killing

With proper planning and common sense driving you can arrive at that Arizona dude ranch room you've had reserved for months early enough in the afternoon to enjoy that first day you're paying for.

Allowing eight hours a day for travel time means that the first and last days of your vacation will be spent on the airplane and lying around the pool at the motel.

the engine to coast down eight-mile-long grades are also extremely dangerous (not to mention illegal) and can prove to be fuelish.

As proof of this, journalists recently drove the route from Palm Springs to Wickenburg in 12 identical 1985 Chevrolet Novas. The miles per gallon recorded ranged from a low of 38.37 to a high of 52.44 (the EPA highway rating for the car is 37). A few of the writers actually tried all the "too-far" tricks listed above, but recorded figures of less than 48 mpg in doing so. The economy champ of the run just followed the old, standard sound tips such as accelerating moderately, getting through the gears as quickly as possible and maintaining a constant speed.

As you can see, driving a rental car isn't much different than driving your own vehicle. However, you do have to approach each rental vehicle as if it were a new purchase.

Remember you're driving a car that you aren't familiar with in surroundings that are also new to you. Slow down and leave plenty of room around you for observing and for safety.

Even on the wide-open, seemingly empty roads of the great Southwest you have to stay alert driving and not let your mind wander to the beautiful scenery. You never know what's around the next bend. When the view is good, stop, pull off the road and enjoy it.

Double Check Saves Life

Sergeant Woodham secures the seat belt of her daughter, Christina, prior to departing for an evening drive. A "double check" like this one may have saved Christina's life when she and her mother were involved in an auto accident. (U.S. Air Force Photo)

Sergeant Patricia L. Woodham is an instructor in the Avionics Branch of the 3450th Technical Training Group. On May 18, 1983, she and her daughter were traveling on base when she became involved in a vehicle accident. Thanks to the use of seat belts, she and her daughter survived to tell about it. The following is her story.

(This story first appeared in the Lowry *Airman* of 12 October 1984)

It was a beautiful May afternoon. One would not have guessed that Denver had gotten a foot of snow the previous day. It was warm — the snow was melting fast. I was on my way home from work and only had to stop at our sitters to pick up our two-year-old daughter. Then I could relax at home and enjoy the 70 degree temperature. Our sitter also lived on base, not far from our own quarters.

I stopped at her house, picked up Christina, put her in her Tot-Rider, got into the car, buckled myself up, and started driving those last few blocks home.

I glanced back at our daughter and realized that in my haste to get home, I had completely forgotten to buckle her into the restraint system. I pulled over and fastened her in . . . all the while thinking of all the people I know who would think I was crazy if they had been watching me at that moment. You know the ones I mean, don't you? It usually goes something like this, "C'mon, what do you really think is going to happen on base! Especially at 15 mph!" Little did I know what I was about to find out.

After the collision, the driver told me that he was going about 35 to 40 mph when he ran the stop sign. He said he just didn't see the stop sign. Estimated damage to my car was in excess of several thousand dollars, but insurance paid for the damage.

If I hadn't taken that extra glance to "double check" our daughter, she may have been lying on the street next to the bumper.

Money fixed my car but children are irreplaceable.

5 MORE NHTSA 1985 CRASH TEST RESULTS

VEHICLE	SPEED/WEIGHT	HIC Driver/Pass	CHEST G'S Driver/Pass	FEMUR LOADS Driver left/right	FEMUR LOADS Passenger left/right
AUDI 5000S 4-Dr Sedan	35.0 / 3397	2105 / 557	39 / 31	362 / 357	292 / 326
FORD TEMPO 4-Dr Sedan	34.8 / 2990	1207 / 932	52 / 40	870 / 580	440 / 310
TOYOTA CRESSIDA 4-Dr Sedan with automatic belt system	34.6 / 3690	883 / 914	50 / 58	1725 / 1820	1355 / 1820
VOLKSWAGEN VANAGON van	34.9 / 3780	1905 / 1060	52 / 44	2140 / 1615	2430 / 1050
MERCURY MERKUR 2-Dr Hatchback	34.9 / 3452	1009 / 1450	55 / 52	446 / 736	670 / 953

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recently released five more crash test results involving 1985 motor vehicles. The test results are part of the federal safety agency's experimental New Car Assessment Program (NCAP). NHTSA is testing a total of 40 motor vehicles in its 1985 program.

All the vehicles were crashed in frontal tests at 35 mph into a fixed barrier. This is five miles per hour faster than the prescribed speed for compliance with federal motor vehicle safety standards. The crash tests are designed to indicate, for vehicles within the same size class, the relative levels of occupant protection and vehicle safety performance.

NHTSA said that while the test results are indicative of relative crash protection provided to occupants wearing safety belts, it is important to emphasize that, in the government's crash test program, only one car of any given make and model is crashed in a specific test. Subsequent crash test results for any vehicle could vary because of differences in the way cars are manufactured and equipped or due to slight variations in test conditions.

Instrumented dummies are used in all tests, and they are protected by the vehicles' standard safety belt system. The head, chest and upper legs of the dummies are equipped with instruments which monitor impact forces and accelerations. The head acceleration is used to calculate the head injury criterion (HIC), a measure of the potential for head injury.

In general, the lower the HIC, the less likely drivers and front-seat passengers would be seriously injured or killed in a frontal crash at 35 mph. A HIC value of 1,000, a chest deceleration of 60 G's (G is a unit of acceleration), and a femur (thigh) load of 2,250 pounds indicate approximate thresholds above which serious injuries are expected.

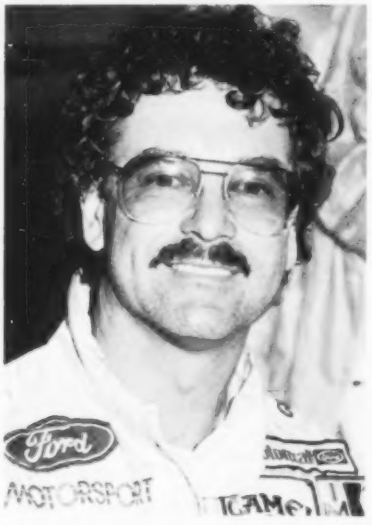
Other aspects of safety performance also are monitored, including whether the vehicles retain the windshield during the crash, prevent displacement of vehicle parts into the windshield area, and maintain the integrity of the entire fuel system to prevent leakage of fuel in a crash. All of the five most recently tested models passed all the tests that were applicable.

The experimental NCAP began in 1979. The agency is continuing to examine several aspects of the program, such as the variability in test results and the relationship of these tests to real world accidents, in order to improve crashworthiness information provided to consumers.

The accompanying chart shows the test results for the five vehicles most recently tested. The 16 previous model year 1985 test results were in the March, April and May issues of DRIVER.

This year Doc Bundy's driving seat is in the 7-Eleven Ford Mustang Probe.

When DOC speaks...



Doc Bundy, a former driving instructor, has plenty of sound advice for all drivers.

When Doc Bundy speaks, other drivers listen. That's not just because the 37-year-old Vietnam veteran is a successful Ford Motorsport driver. As a former instructor who taught defensive driving, anti-terrorist and police pursuit as well as racing, Doc's advice is sound and of value to all drivers.

"I spent three-and-a-half very happy, successful years teaching," Doc said. "Successful, in that a lot of my students, people that I have worked with, are in racing now. I race against some of them."

But Doc's influence reaches beyond the racers and those who paid to have him teach them. Almost everybody he rides with picks up some valuable knowledge. Knowledge that we can all use in our daily driving.

For example, last year Bundy and the Group 44 public relations representative John Baker would arrive the week before International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) GT events and do television and radio interviews as well as other public relations projects.

"So we spent a lot of time together," Doc related. "And he wanted to do the driving. Well, at first that was a little difficult for me to accept. But I thought I understood why he wanted to drive: Most of us (around racing) are frustrated racers. I thought 'I can accept that, and I do get to drive the race cars. I let him drive the rental cars from place to place.'

"Then I saw there were some holes in his driving," Doc continued. "And I started criticizing him. He took it very well. He appreciated the advice — I think. And we began to make great gains. I saw over the year a very good improvement in his driving.

"The basic things — " Doc explained "And it was all basic — like awareness. It's a common word that's used a lot but not very many people think about it."

Bundy continued, "And I would stress upon him how to be aware: constantly scanning mirrors; being aware of the traffic patterns around him because we did a lot of city driving, and just knowing where the cars are around you. You always need to keep awareness in your driving."

There were things other than awareness that Doc helped John with "like momentum. Basically I always tried to teach him to think of his driving in a matter of efficiency," the racer observed.

"He flew — " Doc said of John. "He retired from the Navy — and so he understood some of that terminology. That you should always fly efficient and maintain a certain momentum so that you don't have to accelerate, over-accelerate and that sort of thing; or over-brake.

"And part of that," Bundy commented. "Part of that momentum, or learning to keep that momentum, is to be aware and to drive 10-12 seconds ahead of you.

"And one of the little tricks I taught him is as he is driving down an interstate to pick out an object that he is looking at — one that it just happens his eyes are resting at — and count down to it: one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two. And if he's correct, he's running about 10 to 12 seconds ahead of himself. If you're running four to six seconds then you're not watching far enough ahead.

"You should be aware of the car in front of you especially when you get into heavy traffic," Doc added. "But even more so, you should be aware of six, seven, up to 10 cars ahead of you. See, watching for their brake lights or seeing them slow up or noticing two cars starting to bunch. Then you know there's a change in the pattern — in the traffic pattern — and you need to start calculating.

Racers believe in buckling up.

drivers listen

You also want to make sure the guy behind you is watching you, Bundy noted, "You can see his eyes in your mirror."

And when the traffic pattern starts changing you "plan that maybe they're going to brake," Bundy explained. "Just let off so that you don't have to use a lot of brake. If they accelerate again you can at least step back in. You don't lose momentum.

"This is an efficient way of driving," Doc remarked. "But it all circulates around the key word of awareness. Being aware of what's going on around you.

"In auto racing it doesn't take a tremendous amount of physical abilities to do well. The most important thing is your mental approach. Your mental attitude and being able to concentrate and not let outside things break that concentration."

Related back to street driving, Doc said, "I an one of the worst persons in the world to drive with for one reason. If you were to go on a long trip with me you would find it very boring because I don't talk. I don't have conversations. In fact, past girlfriends used to be upset with me when going on trips because I do concentrate when I drive.

"I have a tendency to drive a little bit over 55, so for one thing I am always aware of watching for our friends, the police. But also I am watching traffic patterns. I like to always know where I am in my car in relation to the rest of the world. And that takes concentration.

"Too many people just go out, sit in the car. They don't fasten their safety belt; they just drive off. They don't really look and see where things are stored in the car, if they've got things lying around, if the doors are all closed or if they've got a flat tire or any of those things.

"We take driving as too much a second nature. We just take it for granted. I think that's why — and everybody's heard it — the Europeans are better drivers. I've spent a little bit of time in Europe and I must confess that they're much more aggressive, there's no doubt about that.

continued

continued

"Seriously, buckle up." Doc Bundy always follows his own advice. Here he receives help with his racing belts from 1984 Trans-Am Champion Tom Gloy.

"But," Doc continued, "they are aware. You don't see the European driving down what's comparable to our Interstates reading a book or a magazine. Or you don't notice them driving along with two people looking at each other — the driver and the passenger looking at each other — having a conversation and driving very broken, very haphazard, not paying attention. You just don't see that sort of thing over there. I haven't.

"I think, for that reason, they are better drivers. They're much more aware.

"I know that getting a driver's license in Europe is much tougher and too many people in this country take that privilege for granted. I'm not necessarily for making all that sort of thing harder to obtain but I think people should wake up to the fact that it is a privilege and know that they ought to pay a little more attention to what they're doing."

Passengers also have a certain responsibility for their own safety according to Bundy. "I think a good passenger should be safety conscious to an extent. If somebody is driving — I don't like the term fast; maybe a little over the speed limit, a little fast, or a little beyond your comfort range — I think you should voice it.

"First off as a passenger," he observed, "you should get in the car and buckle up. I don't care if you're in the back seat, the third seat, in the trunk; put a seat belt around you. The odds are in your favor you'll survive any kind of a situation.

"Second thing is: If you're uncomfortable with somebody's driving, I think you should say, you know, 'That makes me uncomfortable.' "

As a passenger "you should occupy yourself," noted Bundy. "It's not wrong to talk to the driver, but don't get in such a conversation that they have to take their concentration away from driving.

"I think you should assist the driver wherever you can. When John and I traveled together, I did a lot of the navigating. I had things to keep me occupied. And if we knew where we were going or were on a long journey where there was not any navigating to do, I would occupy myself reading or taking naps.

"I think that occupying your own time is probably prudent for any passenger. Just don't take the driver's concentration away from the task at hand."

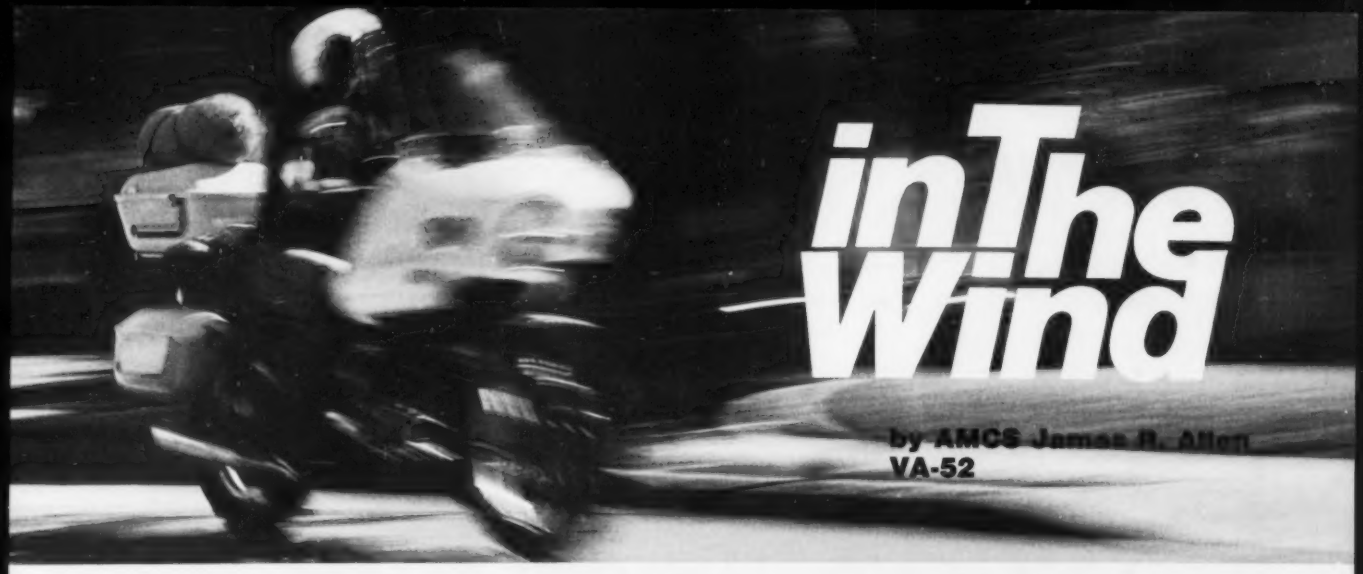
Of course, Doc Bundy does have some very firm ideas about driver's education and they start with "every time you step behind the wheel, or slide behind the wheel; put the safety belt on. Seriously, buckle up.

"Ninety percent of the people who drive today have no idea what their limits are and what an automobile's limits are. High school driver's education teaches a few safety things and parallel parking. You're not trained in handling the car. You're not put in situations where they were out of control and had to get it back.

"There are schools around — they're tied mostly into racing, but not totally — they are defensive, pursuit and handling schools where you can go to learn your limits and an automobile's limits.

"And if the American public would take a little more time to learn those two things then there would be a lot less incidents in this country."

As we said at the beginning, when Doc Bundy speaks, other drivers listen.



in The Wind

by AMCS James R. Allen
VA-52

Is your unit returning home from an extended deployment? The long-awaited reunion with family and friends is always a wonderful time of getting reacquainted, telling great sea stories, and just catching up on the news. However, statistics tell us that these times may be marred by death or injury in a motorcycle mishap.

That may seem to be a brash statement, but it is based on the records of many military units returning to their home bases from deployments. The most serious example in my recollection occurred in the month of May 1983. A 25-year-old second class petty officer had just returned from a seven-month deployment at sea and had purchased a beautiful new 750cc machine from the local dealer. That bike had "the works." While riding with some of his friends, he lost control in a curve due to excessive speed and came to rest in a wooded area well off the road. Paralyzed from his upper chest down, he had managed to accumulate 26 miles on his new bike prior to its destruction.

The result of this accident and many others similar to it over the past few years has been a dramatic increase in Command attention to the current motorcycle mishap rate. The Chief of Naval Operations has expressed concern over the rising loss of life and has developed requirements and programs aimed at the reduction of the unacceptable and needless losses to the Navy each year in motorcycle mishaps. Motorcycle safety courses, training films, presentations, and posters have demonstrated the concern over an area which had, by August of last year, seen 25 killed and 248 injured Navy-wide for calendar year 1984.

Alarming damage and injury statistics have prompted many states in recent years to enact more stringent safety regulations. Unfortunately, regardless of existing laws, countless man-hours of safety instruction, years of hard-earned experience, and numerous articles like this one, there are always a few individuals present who will continue to confound the safety officers, state legislatures, and law enforcement officials by refusing to properly utilize the superb computer located between the human ears. The most common causes of motorcycle mishaps with which these people deal on a daily basis are 1) EXCESSIVE SPEED, 2) ALCOHOL, and 3) UNFAMILIARITY WITH THE MACHINE.

Motorcycle safety training courses are increasing the emphasis on:

— EXCESSIVE SPEED
— DANGERS OF ALCOHOL
— PROPER USE OF BRAKES
— EVASIVE MANEUVERS/DEFENSIVE RIDING
— USE OF HEADLIGHTS/BRIGHT COLORS/REFLECTIVE MATERIALS
— VISUAL SCAN
— PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Now let's look at a few statistics. The probability of injury or death in a motorcycle mishap is five times greater than that experienced in an automobile accident. Further, when a motorcycle mishap occurs, there is an 80 percent probability that an injury will occur. Here are some other interesting statistics from a recent mishap study . . .

— 80 PERCENT OF MISHAPS RESULTING IN FATALITIES WERE THE FAULT OF THE CYCLIST.

— 45 PERCENT OF THE FATALLY INJURED HAD BLOOD ALCOHOL LEVELS ABOVE LEGAL LIMITS AT THE TIME OF THE MISHAP.

— 64 PERCENT OF FATALLY INJURED NAVY MEN NEVER REACHED THEIR 25th BIRTHDAY.

— 46 PERCENT OF THE DECEASED NEVER ATTENDED A MOTORCYCLE SAFETY TRAINING COURSE.

It appears that if you are young and like to drink alcohol, the deck is stacked against you, doesn't it? And no matter what is done by others to educate, train, or protect you, some of you are still likely to be either seriously injured or killed in a motorcycle mishap. Life is full of risks (most of which you have little or no control over), but in this particular area YOU are the deciding factor. YOU decide how fast the machine will go, YOU decide when to stop drinking, and YOU decide when to back off when you are getting in over your head. The lawmakers could enclose you in a suit of armor, but even that would not help you survive running off a high embankment into the waiting arms of a large tree.

Now speaking of protective equipment, helmets are required to be worn on US military installations throughout the world. However, they are *not* always required by local laws off-base. The perpetual argument over the helmet's effectiveness can go on forever (and it probably will), but it is still up to YOU to decide to put it on your head. Assuming that you make the right choice, do not be lulled into a false sense of indestructability. Maturity, use of proper safety equipment, compliance with traffic laws, and good old COMMON SENSE are the keys to safe, enjoyable riding. Stay alert and aware at all times, and remember . . . it's YOUR LIFE. DON'T WASTE IT! See ya in the wind!!

BACKFIRE

LETTERS to the EDITOR

Address your letters to:

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AFISC/SEDD
Norton AFB CA 92409

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DRIVER Magazine
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COOLANT RECOVERY SYSTEM CHECK

The picture on page 26 (March 85 issue), top-left, shows the coolant level being checked. Vehicle is equipped with a coolant recovery system which is the place to check the coolant level during a pre-operational check. The radiator cap should not be removed on a frequent basis.

Also on page 27, picture versus caption brings up a question. How do you expect the average driver to add water to a maintenance free battery?

CMSgt. Jerome M. Sporrer, USAF
Offutt AFB, NE 68113

A coolant recovery system is a excellent place for checking the level of your cooling system, especially when the engine is hot. However, the fluid in the reservoir will tell you little or nothing about the condition of the coolant in the cooling system. There is nothing wrong with removing a cold radiator cap if you are following a regular maintenance schedule and going to replace it every third year (40,000 miles) or when it fails its annual pressure check. The words in the article and caption had to cover all vehicles, not just the one pictured. Therefore, there were such tips as with the battery's "add water as necessary." [1](See below)

[1]*You'd be surprised at the number of batteries that fail simply because the owners didn't lift the cap(s) off and fill them with water. True maintenance-free batteries are sealed units. If you can lift (do NOT pry) or unscrew the caps, then your battery requires regular attention to its fluid level.*

DON'T MONKEY AROUND

Your article "Avoiding the Horns of a Dilemma," February 1985, was an excellent photo story. As an avid reader of Driver I found it a most informative and attention-getting article.

Bringing the readers' attention to the use of seat belts on page 13 was a fine photo. But I believe it is as important to not "monkey" around and close the door before "— you're ready to drive away."

Keep up the good work; your publication is one of the best.

SMSgt Ted Waldron, ANG
Hensley Field, TX 75211

You're right. That monkey fastened his safety belt OK but didn't slam the door shut!

TIRE PRESSURE

It seems that everybody has different ideas about tire pressure. Sears said that 30 psi for their radials but the manufacturer says 26-28. Do you have any facts about air pressure?

TSgt. John W. Gatrell, USAFR
Columbus OH 43209

As Kenneth J. Rapp, Semperit of America National Service manager said in the January 1985 DRIVER special issue on tires: "Optimum air pressure is that which shows wear right up to the edge of the tread, usually about three pounds more pressure than recommended by the vehicle manufacturer, especially on passenger cars. The manufacturer wants you to drive out of the showroom with a smooth riding, comfortable car. The builder's air pressure recommendation is enough to hold the weight of the vehicle and avoid having customers complain to dealers about 'harshness,' but not enough for the real world."

DON'T SEE ANY SENSE

I am amused by your March 1985 DRIVER article "Dead Men Don't Wear Seat Belts" . . . not so much by the statistics on seat belt wearers but by the author "spinning the cylinder and releasing the safety" of his revolver.

I don't see any sense in spinning the cylinder of a gun properly loaded (trigger action will do that or cocking the hammer will) and I would like to know where the safety that needs releasing and re-setting are located on a revolver like the Python.

If the research on the use of the revolver reflects the same thoroughness on the subject of the article, then the first paragraph sums up everything beautifully: "Garbage in; Garbage out." I still enjoy reading your magazine, though! Keep up the good work.

Salvador N. Lazo
FPO SF 98601-1625

Dear Mr. Lazo,

Trigger action or cocking the hammer will advance the cylinder to the next chamber, but such efforts do not produce the same effect as spinning it. While you may not see the sense in spinning the cylinder, our hard-boiled detective does such things because of the noises it produces and the basic intimidation factor it creates. Basically, spinning the cylinder says, "I'm in charge here and I can play with this rod all I want while I con-

trol the situation."

Of course by spinning the cylinder he does run the risk of having the hammer come down on that one empty chamber that's there to keep him from shooting himself in the foot. But being the "real man" that he is, he can afford that gamble (it's sort of the opposite of Russian roulette).

Our detective also says that writing letters to magazine editors is "about like getting into a certain kind of a contest with a skunk: You might get in the first shot, but after that you're out gunned."

Which explains in part why he's no longer with us. He got into an exchange with a well-known British agent who got off two bullets from his Walther PPK before our detective could even get his Colt Python drawn. Then the MI-6 agent proceeded to empty the remainder of the seven-round clip before our "real man" realized that revolvers don't have safeties. Our ex-detective now carries a Heckler and Koch VP-70z, and writes letters for Penthouse.

Sincerely yours,
Compucorp 745,
Terminal 7F
Better Known as: "Halley"

IT HURTS

I am so disgusted! Although my story doesn't involve an Air Force member I would like to share my anguish with those who are willing to listen. I work for the Air Force and I recently vacationed during the Memorial Day holiday.

On 25 May 85, two friends and I left a wedding reception at which none of us had had any alcoholic beverages. We wanted to celebrate the joining of our friends in matrimony after the reception was over. Since I would only be in town for a few days we were trying to have as much fun as we possibly could. I was driving my car and my two friends were in another. I had to return to my mother's home to get more money and I also had to purchase gas. We decided to meet at a particular club. The quickest access — the freeway.

I arrived at the club safely at approximately 12:30 am, assured that my friends would already be there. I was wrong, They would have been there had it not been for a drunk motorist who tried to enter the freeway through an exit ramp. My friend was not belted in and was crushed in the head-on collision. The impact of the two vehicles forced the steering wheel to lodge itself into the forhead and chest. The other friend was belted in. However, she received large cuts in her legs and lost the use of one eye.

Yes, I am infuriated! I lost the best friend I ever had. Another friend has to live with the fact that she will never be able to see out of an eye. As for the drunk motorist, he lost both legs. To my knowledge the motorist has not mentioned the fact that he killed; he is only mad that he will never be able to walk again. I know being sorry is not going to bring back my friend or repair the mutilated body of the other, but self-pity isn't going to bring back his legs either.

My message to anyone who even thinks about DRINKING AND DRIVING — If you don't care about yourself, think of the people who might innocently be hurt or killed. That innocent person might be someone who you love dearly — a child, parent, sister, or brother, or like me, a friend. It hurts . . . believe me, it really does.

Elaine Scarver
Edwards AFB CA 93523

I'VE LEARNED MY LESSON

I would like to relate to you an incident that happened to me about six months ago. I hope someone can learn from this.

About two days before Christmas, my husband and I were driving to the store to exchange a bike siren that didn't work. As we were driving, I noticed my car door wasn't shut and asked my husband to pull over so I could shut it. Thinking that it wouldn't come open yet, he said to wait until we went around the next curve. As we were going around that curve, my car door flew open and I went out the car. I hung on to the door because I was afraid to let go. My husband was afraid to put on the brakes for fear that the car would throw me. So, I hung on to the door as the car drug me along the road. Finally, the car stopped and I let go. I scraped my bottom pretty good, but worse than that, I mangled my right foot and leg. The top of my little toe was cut off and the bone exposed, plus, I had chunks of my foot taken out.

I had surgery done on my foot that night and I was lucky nothing major happened because of the accident. I wasn't wearing seat belts. Had I worn them, none of this would have happened.

I wear my seat belt now, needless to say. I won't go anywhere without buckling up. I can't understand why I never wore seat belts before. It only takes a second to put them on, and once you start wearing them, it's almost automatic to put them on every time you get into the car.

I can honestly say, "I've learned my lesson." I hope someone can learn from mine.

SSgt. Pamela Wilerson, ANG
Louisville KY 40213-2678

Thank you for taking the time to share this experience. Seat belts are great inventions. We wish every reader would use them every time. Maybe a painful lesson like yours will convince a few.

ANTICIPATE

Some sixteen years of driver instruction, accident investigation, amateur diplomacy and other devices that go with driver evaluation have demonstrated to me that driver education could benefit by inserting the principles of ANTICIPATION into the ideas of Defensive Driving.

I do not deny that ice, snow, narrow roads and other hazards cause accidents. They contribute to a lesser or greater degree. But people cause accidents. It's as simple as that.

Educating them is not so easy. Learning from experience is often fatal, as your admirable magazine sometimes shows. Consider this:

A Assess the traffic and its needs at all times.
N Neutralize any accident potential with defensive driving.
T Tune in to traffic, weather and local law.
I Identify surface and environmental conditions. Adjust speed for total control.
C Consult mirrors before indicating any maneuver.
I Indicate maneuvers in good time to assist other drivers.
P Plan an escape route in case of need.
A Adjust following distance to suit stopping distance required.
T Temperance in all things, attitude particularly, alcohol specifically.
E Expect the unexpected. Neither you nor other drivers are perfect.

Sir Vivor
APO NY 09179

☆U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1985— 583-034

A Better Mousetrap?

This converted BMW, dubbed a "Safercycle," has some interesting alterations, including an anti-somersault front-end, special "doors" and handlebars and a unique restraint system. The man in the seat is Tad Winiecki, a rider/inventor who holds patents for the additions. You'll notice that despite all the other safety-related gear around him he still wears a helmet. That, plus boots and heavy clothing, is important gear for those of us who ride motorcycles without all the fancy hardware.